THE ROMANTIC HISTORY OF FAMOUS CATHEDRALS

What Thousands of Americans Will Find Who Tour Great Britain This Summer and Look for Architecture

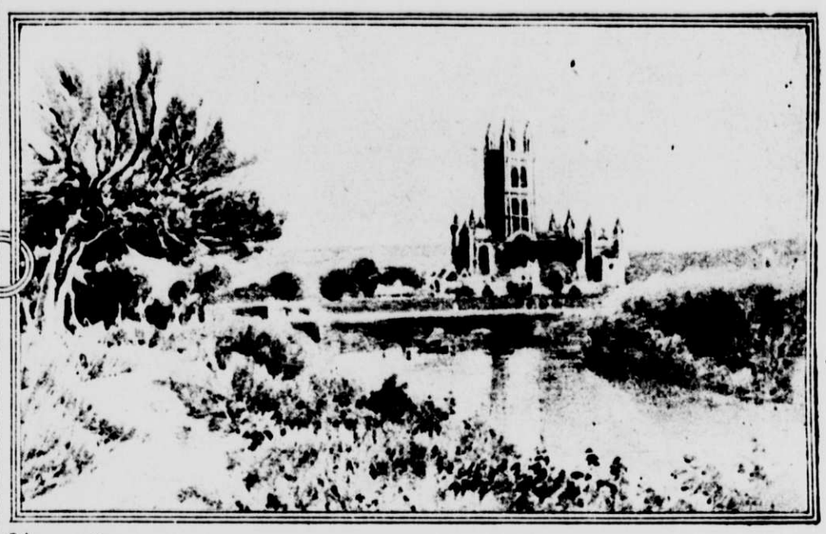
Many Beautiful Structures Date Back for Centuries, and Have Histories That Reek With Romance

Norwich from the South-East

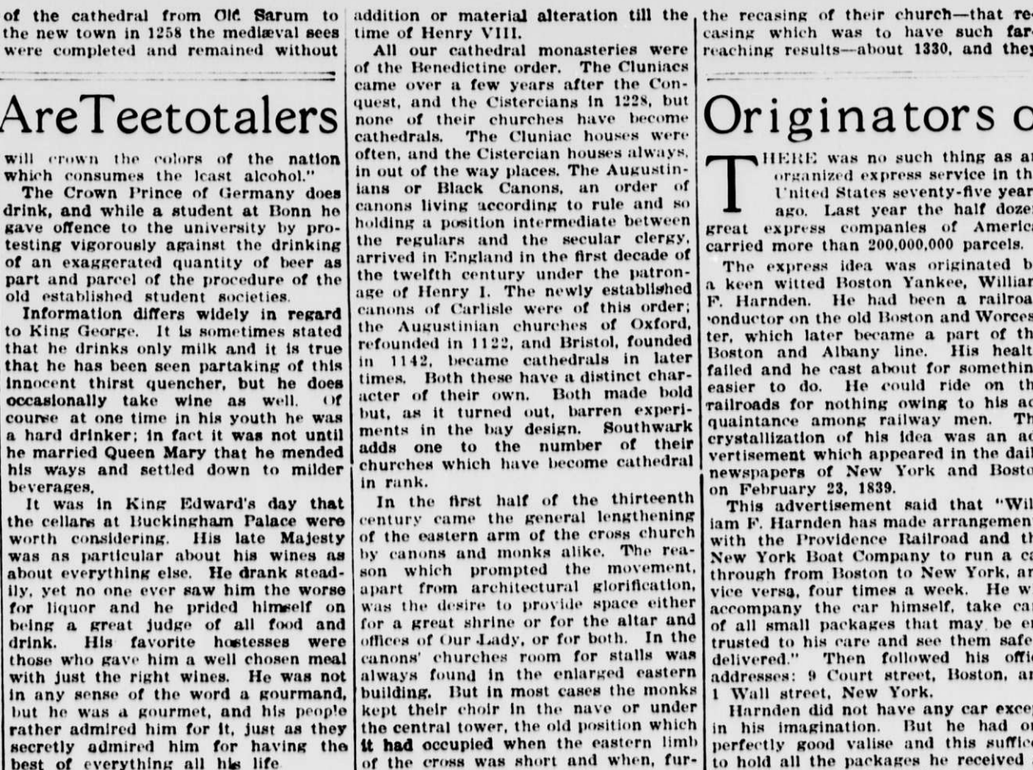
Exeter, the North Tower

Ely from the South-East

York from South-West



Gloucester from the North-West



Ely from the South

I'T'S a big job to tell the story of the cathedrals in England and Wales. Many of them date back long before the Norman Conquest and have histories that reek with interest. Thousands of Americans will shortly be touring England Great Britain and gazing in admiration at some of the many beautiful and historic structures that mark England as the land of cathedrals, the same as Germany is renowned for its castles, France for its chateaus and Switzerland for its chalets.

An English architect, Thomas Dingham Atkinson, has compiled a book of the English and Welsh cathedral churches that leaves little to be desired. It has been published by Little, Brown and Company.

The material remains of our cathedral churches, says Mr. Atkinson, begin, with but few exceptions, with the first few decades following the Norman Conquest. But written history takes back the story centuries before that event and places before us in glowing if somewhat vague terms the buildings of almost the earliest period of English Christianity. And we have in one instance the actual building which Wilfrid planned, on which his eyes looked and in which he was laid to rest.

These Saxon buildings, we used to be taught, were rude timber wigwams like the church at Greenstead in Essex, which is usually pointed to as pre-Norman, but which may, I suppose, be of any date. Saxon churches were probably without exception small, but to suppose that they were rude or badly built plans or cheap is as far from the truth as to picture the time as one of apostolic simplicity. Some of the churches were of wood but others were of wrought stone, and some of these had a confessio or crypt under the chancel. These were at least well enough built to last eleven or twelve hundred years. They were carefully finished, for the walls of even the crypts were plastered, and the plaster was still sticking tight to them at Hexham when I saw it being hacked off in order to expose valuable disjointed fragments of Roman inscriptions. When the building was of timber it was not necessarily rude. Bede tells us of a church of oak and with a thatched roof, and this was after the manner of the Scots. In the first half of the seventh century the Bishop of Lindisfarne took off the thatch and covered both roof and walls with lead; and this is thought to have been no solitary example of a church so treated.

As to the furniture, we have several examples of the stone seat of the Bishop or priest which was placed against the wall of the apse and faced the congregation—Hexham, Beverley, possibly Canterbury, and remains at Peterborough. There is at Ripon what appears to be a fragment of a stone altar, of finished design and workmanship.

When peace returned in the tenth century there was hardly a religious building left in the country; those which the Danes had not reached had fallen into decay through the dispersal and demoralization of the clergy and monks. But with the revival of morals and religion and of Benedictinism in the tenth century there was a revival of architecture. St. Dunstan and St. Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester, were both artists and practical craftsmen. Dunstan presented to Malmesbury Abbey an organ and bells and a holy water stoup; they are said to have been of his own making, but this is immaterial; the interest of the story lies in the simple fact that the tenth century church had organ and bells. Dunstan made a design for a lady to embroider upon a stole, and he is credited with a powerful drawing of himself at the feet of Christ. Æthelwold also presented an organ and bells to his abbey of Abingdon. He gave also a wheel plated with gold and having little bells hung on it.

The architecture of the revived church, it is now thought, was generally inferior to that which had been obliterated by the Danes. There can be little doubt that it was different. The greater number of our Saxon churches, the characteristics of which are familiar to all, the long and short work and the rest of it belong to this period, the tenth and eleventh centuries. A compromise had been made between the basilican church of St. Augustine and the Scottish church of St. Aidan. The building was generally square ended and always had the altar toward the east, and on the whole had more of the native than the foreign element about it.

Perhaps three out of four of our cathedral churches are on pre-Conquest sites, but in five only have actual remains of that time been discovered. The apse found under the west end of the present church at Rochester is attributed to the year 604, the year of St. Augustine's death; there are remains at York which are thought to belong to 627, and at Peterborough to the seventh century. The crypt at Ripon was built at the end of that century. The pygmy church at Oxford is thought by the discoverer, Park Harrison, to date from 727, and by Mr. Micklethwaite from 1004.

The Normans with their lordly ideas swept away almost all the buildings of the conquered race. The vast scale of their work is one of the commonplaces of architectural history, but none the less still remains a wonder.

To the Greek also we owe the orientation of our churches, for though in the course of time churches have in most countries got turned round so that the entrance is to the west, yet the east and west direction of the axis is derived from the Greek temple just as that had derived it from some still earlier building. From this digression we now return to our own land.

In 1075 a decree was issued by the Council of London held under Lanfranc ordering the removal of bishops' sees from villages to towns. The process had begun in the time of the Confessor, and Crediton had been superseded by Exeter in 1050. In the same year that the decree was issued the bishops' seats were removed from Dorchester to Lincoln, and then or soon after from Elmham to Thetford and thence to Norwich in 1094. The "bishop's stool," as it was called in early times, placed at Selsey by St. Wilfrid was moved to Chichester within the next ten or twelve years after the decree, and the first Norman Bishop of Wells removed very soon to Bath. With the addition of Ely in 1109 and Carlisle in 1133 and the removal of the cathedral from Old Sarum to the new town in 1258 the mediæval sees were completed and remained without addition or material alteration till the time of Henry VIII.

All our cathedral monasteries were of the Benedictine order. The Cluniacs came over a few years after the Conquest, and the Cistercians in 1228, but none of their churches have become cathedrals. The Cluniac houses were often, and the Cistercian houses always, in out of the way places. The Augustinians or Black Canons, an order of canons living according to rule and so holding a position intermediate between the regulars and the secular clergy, arrived in England in the first decade of the twelfth century under the patronage of Henry I. The newly established canons of Carlisle were of this order; the Augustinian churches of Oxford, refounded in 1122, and Bristol, founded in 1142, became cathedrals in later times. Both these have a distinct character of their own. Both made bold but, as it turned out, barren experiments in the bay design. Southwark adds one to the number of their churches which have become cathedral in rank.

In the first half of the thirteenth century came the general lengthening of the eastern arm of the cross church by canons and monks alike. The reason which prompted the movement, apart from architectural glorification, was the desire to provide space either for a great shrine or for the altar and offices of Our Lady, or for both. In the canons' churches room for stalls was always found in the enlarged eastern building. But in most cases the monks kept their choir in the nave or under the central tower, the old position which it had occupied when the eastern limb of the cross was short and when, further back still, there had been no eastern limb at all.

The first decline in architectural expression may be said to have shown itself in the second quarter of the fourteenth century. Two examples will illustrate this: The Gloucester monks began the recasing of their church—that recasing which was to have such far-reaching results—about 1330, and they glazed the east window in 1350. At Ely the fall of the central tower in 1322 led to new work of weakened form in octagon and presbytery. The loss is less marked in the new Lady Chapel which was going on at the same time. This building brings us into touch with the tragedy of 1349. Brother John de Wisbech just lived to finish his work and died of the plague in that year.

The Black Death had swept across Europe in 1348, and the half built nave of Siena Cathedral still stands as a striking memorial of its havoc. It appeared in England in the same year, and the page of history and especially of local history reeks with its doings. It was a knockout blow that it gave to English art in 1348 and 1349, followed by others only less heavy in 1361, 1368-69, 1375, 1382, 1390-91. The effect of the plague on architecture was stunning rather than mutilating. There had already appeared a decline in form. What followed was rather a dulness and inertia, a want of vitality and of growth.

The art was carried on by its own impetus to the end of the fourteenth and just into the fifteenth century; the great traditions of the past seem to have been kept alive by men who had reached manhood before the Black Death. William of Wykeham was 25 at the time. He died in 1404 at the age of 80, and then his work at Winchester languished. Canterbury nave was done by men of Wykeham's standing, though it was long in building, and was not quite finished by 1411. The interrupted work at Chester was never resumed. Even in mere bulk of work our cathedral churches illustrate in a striking manner the absence in the fifteenth century builders of that vaulting ambition which characterized their fathers. Hardly any great schemes belong to that period. Towers already begun were finished, cloisters were rebuilt, new screens and traceried windows were made, but nothing approaching the gigantic was done.

King Henry VI. was a great lover of architecture, and the revival which took place at the end of the fifteenth century would perhaps have come fifty years earlier but for the troubles of his reign. The work at the east end of Peterborough—no very heroic affair, it is true—was begun in 1438. But it was interrupted and not finished till the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Henry's rule was of course disastrous in its effects on architecture, for it dried up the main sources of artistic inspiration and when the stream flowed again it was in a new channel. But this check and this change of ambition and ideal are the whole story. The effects on artistic expression cannot have been very permanent except in so far as any such checks and changes affect technique and traditional methods. The Renaissance had already come and is seen in the details of work done twenty years before the Reformation.

The zeal of the first reformers was directed against images which had been the objects of superstition and against the shrines of certain saints, such as Thomas of Canterbury. The fabrics of our cathedral churches and even their decorations probably suffered little till the reign of Elizabeth.

Some good scholarly work was done during the days of the first two Stuarts: Inigo Jones recast a large part of St. Paul's and built a screen across the nave of Winchester. But for the most part the work was in the rather picturesque style known as "King James's Gothic," supposed to have been favored by Laud. Under his influence the churches were at least brought back to a state approaching in its general effect a mediæval character. Unfortunately almost all the excellent work then done in cathedrals has been destroyed during the last fifty years.

The Puritan reaction which followed Laud's proceedings did infinite damage. Sculpture, painting and glass were systematically destroyed on a grand scale. In some districts commissioners with unlimited powers visited the churches, purging them of all that was "superstitious." Some treasures can have been saved only by a strong local feeling, such as the glass of York and Canterbury and of Fairford Church and King's Chapel. Nevertheless, the usual indiscriminate damnation of all persons and things of that time is, I think, a mistake. After all there are good fanatics and bad fanatics.

After the Restoration there were of course renovations. St. Paul's, on which Laud had spent nearly a hundred thousand pounds, was taken in hand; Lichfield, still in ruins from her sieges, was repaired through the energy and liberality of Bishop Hacket; Durham was set in order and newly furnished by Bishop Cosin.

The restoration craze was due in great part to a false critical method and to the unfortunate determination to destroy everything which would not stand its tests. The old critics administered a fixed code of laws and condemned all that did not comply with it. And so "Palladian" architecture was voted "stupid," just as a century earlier architecture in the "Gothick taste" had been voted barbarous. It is not a question of which judgment was right. Both schools were wrong in dogmatizing at all. Architectural criticism, like that of other arts and of literature, must be inductive. This is perhaps more particularly true of architecture, for architecture expresses not only ideals but practical requirements, and more than most arts is governed by tradition. We must not therefore construct a body of laws on abstract principles, except always those few grand truths of universal application. We must first ask, as Sir Leslie Stephen says, what pleases, and then try to find out why it pleases.

How and by whom these great buildings were designed has often been a matter of speculation. The credit has generally been given to ecclesiastics and monks on the authority of monkish and ecclesiastical chroniclers; this has provided matter for more wonder. But the difficulty is not so great if we think clearly what we mean by designing. No doubt an abbot or bishop who gave or found the funds often laid down the main lines on which he wished the work to proceed. I think that the evidence of this can be seen in many buildings from the earliest to the latest times.

The cathedral was completely designed and fully drawn out by a highly skilled architect. Not the sort of architect nor the sort of drawings that we know. He combined, as we cannot do, the duties of designer and of master mason. He doubtless conveyed his meaning, as we with some advantage might do, by diagrams. His knowledge was acquired, as ours should be, in that best of schools, the workshop and the scaffold. He worked, as we should work, not in a style brought from foreign lands or dug up from a long buried past, but in the common building language of the day as he had learned it from his father.

Crowned Heads of Europe Who Are Teetotalers

THOUGH much has been said of Col. Roosevelt's libel suit out in Marquette, Mich., the teetotalism of President Wilson and grape juice cocktails of Secretary Bryan, little mention has been made of the crowned heads of Europe, who are just as temperate as either of them.

And foremost there is the young pleasure loving Alfonso of Spain. Fantastic stories have been published from time to time describing his excesses when in his cups, as a matter of fact he does not drink either wine or spirits, nor does his mother, Queen Christina. Queen Victoria of Spain sometimes takes a glass of wine with meals, and it was noticed that during her visit to the French republic she drank champagne with the President.

Alfonso's total abstinence is not from motives of policy or principle, but simply because of taste. He really finds all alcoholic spirits unpalatable, but the cellars of the Spanish palace at Madrid are stocked with fine wine, and wine is served at every meal.

Ferdinand of Bulgaria forswore all liquors and stimulants of all kinds years ago on the advice of his mother, who he always declares was his most sagacious political adviser. Thanks perhaps to this policy Ferdinand's nerves are always under perfect control. He never loses his temper, never displays any signs of irritation under the most trying circumstances, and this gives him a tremendous advantage in dealing with the hotheaded races on the Balkan coast of Europe.

Queen Emma of Holland is a rather militant blue ribboner, and she instilled her temperance ideas into the mind of Queen Wilhelmina. Neither mother nor daughter touches any kind of liquor on any occasion. Indeed wine never used to be served at the palace until the young Queen married. Then her husband, Prince Henry, took a firm stand on the question, and after considerable discussion with his mother-in-law, as well as his wife, finally succeeded in having wine served to him and to guests.

The two Queens of Sweden and King Gustavus Adolphus are all abstainers, but the cellars of the palace are always well stocked with fine wines, and these are served to guests, though at family dinners water and lime juice are the only beverages.

The Dowager Queen Sophia of Sweden is really the influence back of this temperance of the royal family and no wine is ever served at her own table. She has for forty years been the most powerful supporter of the total abstinence movement in Scandinavia and has devoted much of her wealth as well as her time and influence to the cause. Her favorite son, Oscar, who is the chief heir to her fortune, although he sacrificed his place in the line of succession to the throne to marry her maid of honor, has for several years been the president of the Total Abstinence Society of Sweden.

The Emperors of Austria, Russia and Germany and the King of Italy are not teetotalers, but they have always been abstemious in the matter of stimulants. The Kaiser indeed has done everything in his power to encourage temperance, because, as he declares, "the next war will demand healthy men; war calls for strong nerves, and victory will crown the colors of the nation which consumes the least alcohol."

The Crown Prince of Germany does drink, and while a student at Bonn he gave offence to the university by protesting vigorously against the drinking of an exaggerated quantity of beer as part and parcel of the procedure of the old established student societies.

Information differs widely in regard to King George. It is sometimes stated that he drinks only milk and it is true that he has been seen partaking of this innocent thirst quencher, but he does occasionally take wine as well. Of course at one time in his youth he was a hard drinker; in fact it was not until he married Queen Mary that he mended his ways and settled down to milder beverages.

It was in King Edward's day that the cellars at Buckingham Palace were worth considering. His late Majesty was as particular about his wines as about everything else. He drank steadily, yet no one ever saw him the worse for liquor and he prided himself on being a great judge of all food and drink. His favorite hostesses were those who gave him a well chosen meal with just the right wines. He was not in any sense of the word a gourmand, but he was a gourmet, and his people rather admired him for it, just as they secretly admired him for having the best of everything all his life.

Queen Alexandra is not a teetotaler and her favorite wine, which is served at lunch and dinner, is a rather heavy burgundy. Occasionally she has champagne, but not as she did in King Edward's day, when a very fine brand of champagne was always served.

Originators of Great Express Companies

THERE was no such thing as an organized express service in the United States seventy-five years ago. Last year the half dozen great express companies of America carried more than 200,000,000 parcels.

The express idea was originated by a keen witted Boston Yankee, William F. Harnden. He had been a railroad conductor on the old Boston and Worcester, which later became a part of the Boston and Albany line. His health failed and he cast about for something easier to do. He could ride on the railroads for nothing owing to his acquaintance among railway men. The crystallization of his idea was an advertisement which appeared in the daily newspapers of New York and Boston on February 23, 1839.

This advertisement said that "William F. Harnden has made arrangements with the Providence Railroad and the New York Boat Company to run a car through from Boston to New York, and vice versa, four times a week. He will accompany the car himself, take care of all small packages that may be entrusted to his care and see them safely delivered." Then followed his office addresses: 9 Court street, Boston, and 1 Wall street, New York.

Harnden did not have any car except in his imagination. But he had one perfectly good valise and this sufficed to hold all the packages he received at first. He styled himself "the original expressman," an appellation that he clung to until he died. His backer was a New York hotel man.

At first the business was discouragingly small. Harnden lost about $600 in the difference between income and outgo in the first half year. His backer, however, heartened him up when he was discouraged. He pointed out to him that there would be a lot of packages from abroad for delivery in New York and Boston as soon as the Cunard Line had established its service from Liverpool to Boston. When this was done the express business took a fresh start and prospered.

Harnden's first competitor was a Vermont grocer, Alvin Adams, the founder of the Adams Express Company. Harnden's ill health mastered him before he had been three years in the express business, and he died without even dreaming of the huge industry he had founded. Harnden's partner, Wells, started a line between Albany and Buffalo. William C. Fargo, an ex-railroad man, was Wells's agent at the latter point. The two formed a partnership in the early '50s, and the Wells Fargo & Co.'s express was born. Even from the first, for some unknown reason, the comma was omitted after Wells.

By that time a number of express companies had been formed, so many in fact that they were merging together into larger and larger combinations and were extending their lines continually. The American Express Company was established by Livingston & Co. and Wells & Co. in 1850. In 1854 Harnden's old concern was taken in by the Adams Express Company and the end men in the minstrel shows began to ask: "For whom was Eve made?"

In those booming days, when the gold rush to California was on and the flood of treasure had to be carried eastward, the express companies got an impetus that assured their permanence. Now their field has broadened far beyond the mere carrying of packages, although that still is an enormous industry. An express company to-day will act as your agent for doing any sort of business authorized by law, from redeeming pawned articles to issuing bills of exchange or drafts that are good all over the world.

Prizes of the British Turf.

Statistics of British horse racing lately published show that more than $2,500,000 was won in prizes in Great Britain last year. These figures not only constitute a record but indicate the steady growth of public interest in racing, for "mammoth" prizes have almost ceased to exist, yet total winnings grow.

Twenty years ago some of the stakes were worth more than 10,000 pounds, but now it is practically impossible for a horse to reach the high earnings achieved by Isinglass and Donovan, for the Eclipse stakes is the only mammoth prize remaining, and such races as the Derby and St. Leger are of little greater value than they were two generations ago.

In the past thirty years more than 15,000,000 pounds has been won in Great Britain in racing prizes, which shows the greater amount of public support that is now assisting the owners and managers, derived from gate money. It has been only within recent years that the great bulk of the spectators have not been admitted free; formerly they contributed little or nothing to either the rewards or the expenses of the meeting.